

REMARKS

ON THE

LETTER sent by the Duke of Marlborough
to the Commissioners of Accounts.

4. January. 17th. 12. Agt^g & Debs.

IF what is printed be a genuine Copy of a Letter from the Duke of Marlborough to the Commissioners of Accounts, I must own the Weakness that is shewn in it from the beginning to the end, and the Indiscretion in publishing of it surprizes me no less than the Fact that is confessed in it.

'Tis certainly little less than Infatuation for a Man of the Duke's good Sense to give in Evidence against himself of a Fact, which must otherwise have found Difficulty in gaining Credit: Had he not been so kind as to remove all other People's Scruples by this Confession under his own Hand, 'tis very easily seen how far the good Opinion he has gain'd with not a few, by being at the Head of an Army that has perform'd such glorious Actions, would have created the most favourable Thoughts of every thing wherein He was concerned; and how far the Improbability, that a Man whose Services have been so very amply rewarded; and whose Incomes are fairly so immensely great, would use any indirect Practices only to increase a Heap already too big, might have prevail'd with others; besides that the unaccountable (tho' generous) Pity, which is often apt to move too strongly in English Breasts in favour of every falling Great Man, let his Fall be ever so just, would have postponed our Belief at least, till the Parliament had thoroughly examined, and given their Judgment of it.

I must own, had I not found it in the *Daily Courant*, whose Zeal for the Party cannot be doubted, tho' his Prudence may (for by printing *This*, as well as the *Memorial*, he hath set both his Principals in Lights no way to their Advantage to have appeared in) I should rather have suspected it to have been the Duke's Enemies, than his Friends, that had expos'd this Letter in Print.

For by it he has pinned upon himself a Fact, which unless the Excuse made for it were true, and such as would give a palpable Demonstration of his Innocence, even to the most vulgar Capacity, is in it self of as heinous a Nature as can be well conceiv'd: It comprehends in it, Avarice, Corruption, Breach of Trust, and what, in my Opinion, is yet worse, a hard and base Usage of those very Soldiers, to whose Valour he owes every Inch of his Reputation.

Such is the Fact without the help of the Excuse. And if every Soldier, and Officer that loves his Soldiers, would call to mind, how often, and how very much they have suffered by the Badness of their Bread in every respect; and if every Man out of the Army, would but put himself in the Case of the poor Soldier who has often been reduc'd to this Extremity, that he must either directly starve, or eat such Bread, as when eaten has almost killed another way, I mean by Gripings, Fluxes, &c. they would hardly think I have painted this Fact in worse Colours than it deserves.

Let us then consider the Excuse, and take it as it is stated in this Letter by the Duke himself, and I dare say impartial Men will own, that instead of clearing the Fact, it is so full of Absurdities and Self-contradictions, that 'tis wonderful how any of his Friends could ever hope, that it would pass upon the World either for Truth or Reason.

The Duke tells us in it, that the several Sums of Money which he has received from the Bread-Contractor, Sir Solomon de Medina, is no more than what has always been allowed as a Perquisite to the General, or Commander in Chief of the Armies in the

the Low Countries, even before the Revolution, and since; and assures us at the same time, that whatever Sums he has receiv'd on that Account, has been constantly employ'd for the Service of the Publick, in keeping a Correspondence, and getting Intelligence of the Enemies Motions and Designs. Now can any thing be more absurd or more self-contradictory than this Excuse. 'Tis First, stated as an allowed Perquisite due to the General, and at the same time we are told he has constantly given it, *Nevertheless* out of his own Pocket, to the Service of the Publick. Can he hope to make any Man believe this? that he has out of his known abundant Generosity, given no less a Sum then Threecore and Three Thousand odd Hundred Pounds out of his own Pocket, to the Use of the Publick? For my part, I dare put it upon this Issue, that if any of his Friends can prove that he has ever spent Threecore Pence, which is but one single Crown, out of his own Pocket for the Service of the Publick, I'll be content to believe the whole.

This Excuse is so very ill put together, and so Destructive of its self, that it needs no further Confutation; but I would fain ask any Man who would be so hardy as to defend it (upon a Supposition, which is not indeed to be supposed, that if it were possible the Duke could have used this single Piece of Generosity) what was the reason, or how came it to pass, That so very handsome an Action as this would have been, if the Money had been really applied as is pretended, was made such a mighty Secret of? How came the Duke to be so much afraid of letting the World know of it; that he transacted the whole Affair with the utmost Secrecy; and received the Bills from Medina with his own Hands? Or, what is still more wonderful, How came this allowed Perquisite not be known to be such, even to the Duke's own Secretary and Auditor of these very Bread-Contracts, Mr. Cardonnel? Who has sworn that he never knew, or heard of any such Perquisites, till the late Rumor of Sir Solomon Medina's Evidence before the Commissioners of Accounts.

I cannot but observe his Grace tells us, This had been an allowed Perquisite to the General or Commander in Chief, of the Army in the Low-Countries, even before the Revolution as well as since. For my part this is as unintelligible to me as the rest, I can't imagine what General or Commander in Chief of an Army in the Low-Countries, before the Revolution he points at. I know of no English Man since the *Earl of Leicester* in Q. Elizabeth's time, and I believe his Grace would not thank any Body that should say, He took the Actions of that Earl for his Example. And since the Revolution I am sure there has been none but himself and K. William; and I hope no one will endeavour to blacken the Memory of that Prince with an Action so mean and base. He had a Soul that scorned it, and I hope in justice to his Memory 'twill not be attempted.

I cannot but observe too what is said in this Letter, that the late K. was sensible that the Money allowed by Parliament for secret Service was too little, but that he was unwilling to apply to the Parliament for more. I hope I may be pardoned when I say it is not highly probable, that that Prince's sound Judgment could doubt that the same Parliament that allowed between Six and Seven Millions to the Use of the War in general every Year, would have denied an additional Ten Thousand Pounds for so important a Service, if he had thought it requisite.

A great many more Remarks are very obvious to be made: But I shall conclude with making this, that if so much Money, as his Grace would have us believe has been yearly expended in secret Service, 'twas not judiciously laid out that Year, when the French by Surprise made themselves Masters of Ghent, Bruges, and almost all Brabant: And when our Bread-Waggons had most certainly been cut off, by a detached Party from the French Army, (the Consequence of which had been nothing less than raising the Siege of Lisle) had it not been prevented by the incomparable Conduct and Valour of General Webb in the Battel of Winnen-dale, more than by any Intelligence his Grace received of either the Enemies Numbers or Motions.

And the chief reason why I make no Remarks, is, that I hope as the Letter found room in a *Courant*, these are not too bulky to be inserted in a *Post-Boy*.